

Iron County Register
BY E. D. AKE.
MISSOURI.
CORDELLA.

ORDELLA HACKETT was out mending her back fence. This was nothing unusual, for the fence had a habit of needing mending, and for many a long year there had been no one but Cordelia to do it; and, in fact, to do all the mending and tending and baking and making for the hungry Hackett family. She had smoothed the way down into the valley for her poor, paralytic father, and had paved the way up the hill of life and into an education for her brothers and sisters, and was now thinking of performing the same office for the motherless child of an older half-brother.

But Cordelia did not look old, in spite of the 32 years. Her face was as fair and vivacious as the riotous, clambering roses that essayed to soften and hide the dilapidated fence; and her eyes were the same merry, bewildering eyes that had proved the joy and torment of more than one susceptible heart in the days of her girlhood. But during these later years she had been too busy for such things; and her brusque, business-like manner had effectively prevented admiring glances from developing into anything verbal.

In spite of its general air of decrepitude, the Hackett place was very pretty and homelike. Bright flowers and clambering vines had been influenced by Cordelia to screen the unsightly spots; and it would have been a poor, heartless soul who had gone into the place and looked behind them for broken weather-boarding and tottering pickets. Birds seemed to like the arrangement, for the vicinity was sure to be melodious of a bright spring morning; and butterflies and bees and fragrant odors also appeared to be well suited, for they could always be found lingering about the place.

Tap, tap, tap rang Cordelia's hammer as she went along the fence, straightening a slanting picket here and driving a fresh nail in place of a rusty one there; and tap, tap, tap, sounded firm, approaching footsteps on the sidewalk. But the artist of the hammer did not notice. Her thoughts were busy in reviewing the past and in making plans for the future. The week before, her youngest brother had gone into the world to make a place for himself, and now she was alone—for the first time in her life. She had thought to remain in her pretty, vine-covered cottage and read and study and do just as she liked. But only this morning a letter had come from her brother John, inviting her to live with him and look after his children. Well, of course she would go; but it was with a sharp pang she made the decision.

Presently the nails gave out, and she rose with the intention of going after more. But as she did so, she saw the figure of a man leaning on her gate; and a pair of keen, quizzical eyes were looking straight into her own.

An angry flush rose to her face, but was quickly succeeded by a look of pleased recognition.

"For the land sake, Tom Rogers!" she cried, as she stepped forward and gave him her hand. "Who ever thought to see you here! And with such whiskers! Why, I declare I scarcely knew you! Let's see, it's ten years since you went out west?"

"Twelve, Cordelia," he said, smiling. "You remember it was the year after father sold his farm. That was in '82. Lizzie White had a lawn party the evening before I left."

"Yes, I remember," giving him an arch look. "You went home with Sadie Adams, and folks did say—"

"Oh,shaw, Cordelia!" he remonstrated, "you and Sadie were broken up, and I started to go home with both of you, but that little Ed Purcell came up, and you went off with him." Then, with sudden consternation: "I—I beg your pardon. You ain't married to him, are you?"

"Not yet," placidly. "He comes 'round the bush. But, you see, I've had all I could put my hands to without thinkin' of such things." Then, with a gay, ringing laugh: "But, let's talk sensible, Tom. I give up marryin' ages ago. How are you gettin' on west?"

"When did you come, and how long are you going to stay?"

"Just got in, and you're the first person I've talked to," he answered, gayly. "I happened to come this way, and thought I'd stop for old times sake. You've got a mighty flowery place, Cordelia."

"Yes, I like it. But won't you come in and sit down on the piazza while I make some cool lemonade? It's pecky hot out here."

"Don't mind if I do," with alacrity. "I ain't in no particular hurry, and your piazza looks right cool and inviting. And, besides, I'd like to ask a lot of questions about the boys and girls; what are they doing, and who's married and who ain't?"

He opened the gate and stepped into the yard, and as he did so his strong, stalwart figure showed to its full advantage. He was more than six feet in height, and his clear, ruddy complexion was the picture of health and good nature.

ture. Cordelia's eyes rested on him approvingly. As they went up the path, she noticed that he walked with a firm, confident tread, like a man who had met the world and conquered it.

Two rocking-chairs were placed opposite each other on the piazza, and while Cordelia was making the lemonade Tom gazed around with boyish delight. The piazza was screened from the road by honeysuckles and wisterias, and he could count at least a dozen butterflies sailing contentedly about. Almost in reach of his hand was a robin's nest, and as he raised himself slightly to look at the eggs the owner began to scold him from one of the rafters overhead.

"Just exactly like it was 12 years ago," he muttered, delightedly. "And, on my soul, I believe that's the same old bird who used to scold me so terribly! There, there, there!" as the robin redoubled her cries, "that isn't the way to welcome a friend. I won't hurt your eggs."

Here Cordelia came out with the lemonade and a small stand which she placed between the two chairs.

"There, help yourself," she said, hospitably. "And now tell me how you've been gettin' on west."

"Oh, as tolerable—as they say out there," he replied, laughing. "Only in my case, the 'jest' tolerable means first rate. I started as a cowboy, and then bought a few head of cattle and then some land, and after that pushed ahead pretty steady. I was always hard-working, and so got on faster than some of my neighbors. After awhile a railroad came through, and the village started to grow, and I was in luck. That boosted me right to the top. Now, I've got a pretty ranch as there is west of the Missouri."

"Why, that's splendid!" she cried, her face glowing with pleasure. "I'm awfully glad you're doing so well. Folks round here have an idea that you've been sort of—of runnin' out."

"How come they to get such a notion?"

"FOR THE LAND SAKE! TOM ROGERS," he demanded, his face flushing wrathfully.

"Well, I—I believe Ed Purcell spoke of it in the first place."

"Ed Purcell?" Tom rose to his feet as though he would annihilate the object of his wrath. Then he sat down with a smothered laugh. "The mean liar! He don't know the first thing of what I have been doing. You didn't believe him, Cordelia?"

She looked distressed.

"How could I help it, Tom?" she faltered. "Ed said he had letters from you off and on, and I didn't suppose he would tell a story. Then, with an effort to change the subject: "Did you bring your family along?"

"Family?"

"Yes; your wife and children?"

He gazed sharply at her for a moment to see if she was in earnest, then he threw himself back in his chair with a sudden burst of laughter.

"Did Ed tell you that?" he asked, as soon as he could get his breath. "Well, he's a dandy, he is. And did you believe it?"

She did not answer, but he could see from her changing countenance and averted eyes that she had believed it.

"Look here, Cordelia," he said, abruptly, "what do you suppose I came back for?"

"To look around—to see your relations, perhaps," she answered, hesitatingly.

"My relations are all out west. Father and brother Jake went there soon after I did. No, it was on account of this," taking a small slip of paper from his pocket and handing it to her. "Jake told me the home paper, and sometimes I look it over. Last week I happened to see this item. Read it."

She did so, mechanically.

"We understand that our esteemed fellow-townsmen, Paul Hackett, has obtained a lucrative position in the city, and that he will soon depart for the scene of his future labors. This will leave his sister, Miss Cordelia, to keep house alone."

"I don't see much in that," she said, as she handed back the paper.

"Well, I do. And how, it brought me here. His voice had grown low and intense, and his gaze was so eager that her own self beneath it. "Listen, Cordelia. When I was returning that night, after I had gone home with Sadie Adams, I met Ed Purcell. I felt more like pitching him into the bushes than talking, but the fellow was so friendly and soft-spoken that I was obliged to stop through pure civility. He spoke about the weather and the party, and then told me that you and he were engaged. I never liked the scamp, but I didn't suppose he would tell a lie. The next day I started west."

Cordelia was standing now, her face flushed and her eyes blazing.

"Engaged—to Ed Purcell?" she gasped. "Oh, Tom! you didn't believe that?"

"How could I help it?" he answered, grimly, repeating her words of a few minutes before. "I didn't suppose he would tell a story." Then all the anger and grinning left his face, and as he held out his arms the tenderness of his eyes was plain to see.

"The flush grew deeper on her face, but her voice was clear and firm as she answered: "Yes, Tom!"—N. Y. Ledger.

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PLAINLY STATED.

The Degrading of Silver Has Increased the Price of Gold and Lowered That of Commodities.

The American in a recent editorial showed that as one nation after another has closed its mints to silver the demand for gold has increased, its price has risen, and there has been a general fall in the prices of commodities. It says:

"Sauerbeck's tables of forty-five leading English commodities show prices to be about 37 per cent. lower to-day than they were on the average for the years 1867-1877, while tables covering sixteen of the principal exports of the United States, taken with regard to importance, show a fall in prices for the fiscal year 1895 of 54.55 per cent. over prices ruling in 1873. Mr. Sauerbeck's tables are substantiated by the tables of the London Economist, and the general fall in prices in London of twenty-six of our chief imports, which show collectively a fall of 36.47 per cent. for the subsequent year 1895, as compared with the year 1873."

"Between 1850 and 1873 the labor cost of production was falling faster than since, but prices were not falling—they were rising—and the wage-earner benefited from improved methods of production in higher wages. Since 1873 prices have fallen almost steadily, and the producer has reaped less and less reward for his industry. The only bright spots in our industrial history for the past twenty years have been when prices were rising consistently upon the various measures to enlarge the use of silver."

"The most palpable but far from the most injurious effect of falling prices consequent upon the appreciation of gold has been to double the burden of all debtors and levy a double tax on all production. It forces every debtor to pay more than he owes, and every creditor to receive less than he is due. In 1873 the funded debt of the United States amounted to \$1,710,482,950, now it amounts to \$747,360,400, but the same quantity of commodities which it would take to cancel this amount in 1873 would take to cancel it in 1895 to some \$2,050,000,000, but it would take the same quantity of commodities to pay the debt today as it would \$2,310,000,000 debt in 1873. As with the United States, so it is with our railroads and other debtors."

These facts cannot be successfully controverted. The rise in gold has caused lower prices, and lower prices mean bankruptcy for the producer, idleness, lower wages and distress among toilers. The American says:

"The silver using countries are placed at a great advantage in competition with us, for they have been working on a stable standard and have had no disturbance of wages or prices. With what we look upon as a fall in silver, prices and wages have not advanced in silver-using countries, while with what they look upon as an appreciation of gold, prices and wages have not fallen in gold-using countries proportionately."

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WILL NOT DOWN.

If Silver Is Dead It May Prove to Be a Very Lively Corpse on Election Day.

The agitation of the currency question has proved two things beyond a doubt, which the gold-bugs will admit if at all disposed to be candid. The first is that the popular belief regarding the nine lives of the Thomas cat has been eclipsed as a matter of wonder by the many lives of the "silver grays," and the second is that it has determined a disposition to come back. Mr. Watterson may stop his press at 3 o'clock in the morning to give it a whack, and Mr. Horace White puncture it with his pencil every evening; and yet, before the star-eyed cat explains more than that he is tired of politics anyhow, and ere the Evening Post mistake gets through singing with a nasal twang a dirge on passing away, passing away, it appears in all the old likeness that they know so well!

The tactics of the gold-bugs are not such as to inspire confidence in their friends or to awaken admiration in the breasts of the neutral. Much sport has been made by their organs of the method which has been adopted by the Hidalgo who is doing the Cid Campeador act so insignificant in Cuba. His belief that he is suppressing the insurrection of so many states by suppressing unfavorable war news, has been the foundation for no end of alleged humor. Are the tactics of our friends, the enemy, awakening any more respect? When they assure their followers that an overwhelming revolution is at hand, and that the gold-bugs have taken place, and that assertion in a short time is proven to be a fake with a big F; when they assert that that revolution has extended to Georgia, and the declaration turns out to be as fictitious as Weems's little hatchet story of Washington; when they rub their palms together unctuously and write with a flourish as important as the philosopher who has evolved from his brain some divine, humanity-benefiting idea, that the sentiment of silver is dying or dead, and then continue to fight the sentiment with the desperation of a man who stands by a gallows and does the public think? Naturally, it concludes that Gen. Campos is the prototype of many frauds and freaks in America.

The truth is, so long as the mass of people have any interest in their own pockets, they will be susceptible to the crucifixion of the white metal will exist. It is stated in one of Paul's letters that we die with a corruptible body, but shall rise incorruptible. It seems that the application can be made regarding the free silver death and resurrection; every silver-using country has had its infold dearer and more highly prized by the people. It is one of the issues that will not go down, though the hired sheets of Wall street have as many lies as Jack on his alehouse bench; and these same papers know that it is as steadfast as the obelisk of the desert, and that the "damned spot would not out!"—Memphis Commercial Appeal.

A FINANCIER'S VIEW.

This Country Could Act Independently and Successfully in Establishing a Standard.

The New York Independent recently published the views of several leading financial writers, both gold standard and free coinage. Among the articles on bimetalism was one from the pen of William P. St. John, the successful New York city bank president and financier, who has written some very able articles for leading papers from a free silver standpoint. This paragraph, coming from the pen of the leading banker of the country, is worthy of consideration:

"The happy achievement predicted for ideal bimetalism would depend for its certainty on the one indisputable fact of history, to wit, that the ancient world has never been afflicted with the excess of the supply of gold and silver over the requirements of the arts and Asia would be without employment, except as money. This excess would be effectually money without the coining of it at all, and at the same time it would be converted into the money at the coming price. Hence, whether a few nations or a single great nation could achieve the like result under the law of bimetalism, adopted independently, would depend on what supply of more foreign money was achieved by the conversion of the money at the coming price. If the mints of the United States offered unlimited coinage for silver into our present standard silver dollars, while continuing our offer of unlimited coinage for gold at 23.8 grains of gold, the gold standard would be maintained, and the silver standard would be converted into the money at the coming price. If the mints of the United States offered unlimited coinage for silver into our present standard silver dollars, while continuing our offer of unlimited coinage for gold at 23.8 grains of gold, the gold standard would be maintained, and the silver standard would be converted into the money at the coming price."

President St. John closes his article with this declaration:

"My research of the experience of France, of the experience of the United States, of the influence of these experiences on the world at large, satisfy me that conditions present and seemingly prospective warrant an alternative of the gold standard of representative bimetalism independently, if re-enacted as the law of the United States. I verily believe that, at least for several years to come, the aggregate sum of silver that the outside world would spare us would be welcomed into our money, the silver dollars floating by certificate as now; that for so long the achievement would be the identity of our coinage price for gold and silver with the world's market price of each; that, for so long, a dollar's worth of gold would be the gold in a full-weight gold dollar, and a dollar's worth of silver would be the silver in a full-weight silver dollar. Hence, at least for years, the achievement would be the concurrent circulation of gold and silver money in the United States."

The Home and Silver.

A traveling (Va.) correspondent declares that the currency question is a very lively issue in the campaign in Virginia. This state votes for half of the members of the house of delegates. The senators to be chosen will vote for Union vote for United States Senator Daniel's successor. Daniel is one of the most pronounced advocates of free silver in the country, and is, perhaps, the most popular man in his state to-day. At nine out of ten conventions held, Daniel and free silver have been endorsed. The silver sentiment in the Old Dominion is as strong as it is anywhere in the country. All of the daily papers in Richmond are advocates of the so-called sound money. A traveling solicitor for one of them said that if any one wanted to get a correct idea of the extent of the silver sentiment in Virginia, all he had to do was to go into the country.

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FRUIT TRIBUTES.

The Up-to-Date Young Man's Latest Offering to His Lady Love.

The latest requirement laid upon the pocket and affections of the generous young man is the offering of fruit to the lady of his admiration. She is going to expect it, and the very up-to-date fruiter is no more the swain's good friend than is the florist or confectioner.

To send a modest present of fruit this winter will be a test of affection, indeed, since the dealer has taken counsel with himself and learned the virtue of offsetting his wares with ribbons and baskets of wondrous manufacture.

It all happened because a flashy young man ordered several pounds of luscious hot-house grapes, golden pearls and late Virginia peaches to be sent to his betrothed on her arrival from Europe. He refused to have them delivered in the usual plain but honest tin, and insisted upon a basket of the fruit dealer, bonney a rustic cornucopia basket, woven of green and brown cedar bark, supported on three tall legs. This he lined with autumn leaves, heaped in the fruit with no inartistic hand, dropped around in the corners English walnuts and chestnuts still in the half-open burr, and tied all the curled ends of the cornucopia with masses of russet brown and purple ribbons. The basket met with so many compliments and approval, that both the girls who saw it and the fruiter himself were delighted. The young man, however, paid out just ten dollars for his gift, and so implicated all his fellow men.

The way to a maiden's affections now lies by the way of a fruit basket, and some of them are really worth having. Until the very latest moment in the season peaches will be the one desired contents for those made of gold and silver, and straw woven in with different-colored ribbons, lined with big green silk leaves, the peaches arranged in a pyramid, wearing ribbon belts and bows around their fat, rosy bodies.

Next in order are countrymen's hats, of a curious suburban straw, filled with peaches; and prettiest of all, round, rough, flat baskets made of brown withies, with big loop handles and piled with green and deep purple grapes. These baskets are in imitation of those the grape gatherers use in Burgundy, for those made of gold and silver, and straw woven in with different-colored ribbons, lined with big green silk leaves, the peaches arranged in a pyramid, wearing ribbon belts and bows around their fat, rosy bodies.

Every basket of oranges is picked specially with a stem and one green leaf attached, and though these baskets cost ten dollars, twelve dollars and fifteen dollars, the really expensive ones are trimmed with bon-bons. The confectioners make cunning imitations in paper mache of peaches, peaches and apples and fill them with assorted chocolates. A handsome basket has at least half a dozen of these pretty bonbonniere set amid the other fruits and one gift of fruit made recently by a New York swain was a Chinese mandarin's hat filled with red and green satins; somewhere amid the bows is caught a pair of cunning little grape scissors, and already, with the arrival of early oranges, have come lovely green palmetto baskets, woven in big broad leaves, and filled with oranges of twisted orange satins; one of them holding a little knife.

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